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Docket No.: AD6856USPCT

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REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested for the following reasons.

In paragraphs 3-5 all of the prior obviousness rejections have been withdrawn.

In paragraph 7, Claims 1, 2, 10-12, 24-41, 46-55, 58 and 61-76 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Gutweiler (US 5,573,842) in view of Dauvergne (FR 2,401,941 Abstract), and Shohi (EP 1036775), further in view of Degeilh (US 4,696,971) and then in view of Masao (JP08-337446).

In paragraph 8, Claims 59-60 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over Gutweiler (US 5,573,842) in view of Dauvergne (FR 2,401,941 Abstract), in view of Shohi (EP 1036775), in view of Degeilh (US 4,696,971), and further in view of Keppler (US 4,433,108) and then in view of Masao (JP08-337446).

Rather than present a detailed response to each point in the lengthy Action, applicants focus herein to the comments made in this Office Action concerning why the new rejections have been issued and why the Patent Office is presenting the same rejections as those that were withdrawn with one additional document (Masao) added.

Specifically, the Office Action is focused on the fact that applicants added the phrase "suitable for use in the manufacture of glass laminates" in the claims and applicants submit that this has resulted in the Patent Office missing the main point of why the cited documents do not teach the claimed invention and, in fact, lead away from the claimed invention. That is, applicants submit that Degeilh teaches away from the claimed invention because the claims are directed to a process involving the step of raising the pH of the mixture to at least pH 10, whereas Degeilh teaches a process involving a step of neutralizing to a pH of no more than 5. The addition of the phrase "suitable for use in the manufacture of glass laminates" to the claims was to expedite prosecution as the prior Examiner seemed to be arguing that Degeilh only taught away from the claimed pH for PVB suitable for use in glass laminates as adhesion is an important factor in those end-uses. However, applicants submit that the real issue at hand is that the instant rejection is improper since the teachings in Degeilh lead away from the claimed invention by teaching away from steps (II) of the independent claims which in all cases recites the "raising the pH of the mixture to at least pH 10" as claimed and since none of the cited documents (including Masao) would lead the person of ordinary skill in the art to modify the process of Degeilh to arrive at the claimed invention.

Applicants submit that Masao adds nothing of importance to the previously presented rejections. The previously cited documents already describe what seem to be the pertinent features of Masao, including glass laminates made with PVB interlayers. Moreover, Masao doesn't teach anything pertinent to the conditions for making PVB. For instance, looking at paragraph 0054 of Masao it can be seen that Masao starts with 65% PVB in zylene and doesn't teach anything about how the PVB was made.

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Next, looking at the claims and the teachings of the cited documents that are focused on making PVB and PVB sheets, it can be seen that Degeilh is focused on improving the Dauvergne (FR 2,401,941) process and indicates that the Degeilh lower pH reduces costs and provides other advantages. Degeilh expressly teaches away from using DOSS in a process involving stabilizing a mixture of the type obtained in step (I) by (a) raising the pH of the mixture to at least pH 10, (b) isolating the resin by draining the liquid, and (c) washing the resin with neutral pH water. Degeilh teaches that the process should be carried out with DOSS and neutralizing to pH of no more than 5, not using dodecylbenzene sulphonate in combination with a higher pH as in Dauvergne. For example, at column 2, lines 15-20, Degeilh teaches that it is improving the process of Dauvergne (FR 2,401,941) by using the combination of discontinuing neutralization as soon as a pH of 5 is reached and by use of DOSS. At column, 2, lines 33-40, Degeilh states that "the use of DOS effective as an emulsifier substantially decreases the 'curing time' of the polyvinyl butyral after neutralization to a range of 5 to 10 minutes." This can also be seen from the Degeilh paragraph beginning at column 3, line 15, which states:

"A particularly important requirement for improving the properties of the polyvinyl butyral according to the invention is the presence of DOS effective as an emulsifier. DOS advantageously facilitates the after-treatment of the polyvinyl butyral to separate the product. Unlike conventional emulsifiers which are removed from the polymer by the addition of a base, DOS is completely and inexpensively removed from the polymer by a thorough washing with water. As a result, a product is inexpensively obtained which has superior adhesiveness to contiguous glass materials."

From the above quote, it can be seen that the DOSS is used in Degeilh to facility the after-treatment of the polyvinyl butyral to separate the product in an environment wherein the pH is not raised by adding a base. Thus, Degilh is teaching away from the claimed features of step (II) of the independent process claims, which is claimed in claim 1 as follows:

"(II) stabilizing the mixture obtained in step (I) by (a) raising the pH of the mixture to at least pH 10, (b) isolating the polyvinyl butyral resin composition by draining the liquid, and (c) washing the polyvinyl butyral resin composition with neutral pH water;"

From the above it can be seen that Degeilh leads away from the claimed invention and cannot be combined with the other documents as in the rejection.


For the above reasons, applicants submit that the rejections are improper and should be withdrawn.

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In view of the foregoing, allowance of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested. Should any matters remain, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed direct dial telephone number in order to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



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